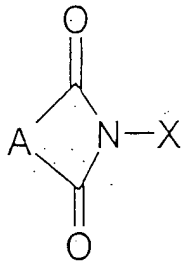
IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 4 and 7 to 9 without prejudice.

Claim 1 (Amended) A process for preparing a hydroperoxide from a hydrocarbon selected from a group consisting essentially of primary hydrocarbons, secondary hydrocarbons and mixtures thereof ~~its~~ corresponding to said hydroperoxide ~~hydrocarbon~~ which comprises conducting oxidation of said hydrocarbon with an oxygen-containing gas in a reaction mixture containing said hydrocarbon and a catalyst comprising a cyclic imide compound and an alkaline metal compound.

Claim 2 (Amended) ~~Process~~ The process according to claim 1 wherein the said cyclic imide compound is the compound of formula (1)



(1)

wherein

X is an oxyl radical or a -O-R1 group, wherein R1 is selected from the group consisting of: hydrogen; halogen; hydroxyl; C_1-C_6 alkyl; C_6-C_{18} aryl; C_3-C_{20} cycloalkyl; C_1-C_{20} alkoxy; -CO-R2, wherein R2 is a C_1-C_{20} hydrocarbonyl group; -O-CO-R3, wherein R3 is a C_1-C_{20} hydrocarbonyl group or a carboxyl group; or -CO-O-R2, wherein R2 is a C_1-C_{20} hydrocarbonyl group;

A is -CR4=CR5- or -CR4-CR5-, wherein:

(i) R4 and R5 are independently selected from the group consisting of: hydrogen; halogen; hydroxyl; C_1-C_6 alkyl; C_6-C_{18} aryl; C_3-C_{20} cycloalkyl; C_1-C_{20} alkoxy; -CO-R2, wherein R2 is a C_1-C_{20} hydrocarbonyl group; -O-CO-R3, wherein R3 is a C_1-C_{20} hydrocarbonyl group or a carboxyl group; or -CO-O-R2, wherein R2 is a C_1-C_{20} hydrocarbonyl group; or

(ii) R4 and R5 taken together with the carbon atoms to which they are joined form a cyclic group, said cyclic group containing 1 to 8 rings, either fused or linked, said rings being aromatic rings or non-aromatic rings, each ring having 3 to 18 members selected from the group consisting of carbon atoms and heteroatoms, and being optionally substituted with one or more substituents selected from the group consisting of nitro; phosphine group;

phosphonium group; halogen; hydroxyl; C_1-C_6 alkyl; C_6-C_{18} aryl; C_3-C_{20} cycloalkyl; or C_1-C_{20} alkoxy.

Claim 3 (Amended) ~~Process~~ The process according to claim 1 wherein said cyclic imide of formula (1) is selected from the group consisting of N-hydroxphthalimide, N-hydroxynaphthalimide, -hydroxymaleimide, N-hydroxysuccinimide, and mixtures thereof.

Claim 4 (Canceled)

Claim 5 (Amended) ~~Process~~ The process according to claim 1, wherein said alkaline metal is selected from the group formed by lithium, sodium, potassium and cesium.

Claim 6 (Amended) ~~Process~~ The process according to claim 1, wherein said alkaline metal compound is selected from the group consisting of oxides, organic acid salts, inorganic acid salts, halides, alkoxides, oxoacids and their salts, isopolyacids and their salts, heteropolyacids and their salts, and mixtures thereof.

Claim 7 (Canceled)

Claim 8 (Canceled)

Claim 9 (Canceled)

Please add the following claims.

Claim 10 (New) A process for preparing a hydroperoxide from a hydrocarbon corresponding to said hydroperoxide which comprises conducting oxidation of said hydrocarbon with an oxygen-containing gas in a reaction mixture containing said hydrocarbon and a catalyst comprising a cyclic imide compound and an alkaline metal compound wherein the amount of said cyclic imide in the reaction mixture ranges from 0.0001 to 1 percent by weight.

Claim 11 (New) The process according to Claim 10 wherein the amount of said alkaline metal compound in the reaction mixture ranges from 0.000005 to 0.01 percent by weight.

Claim 12 (New) A process for preparing a hydroperoxide from a hydrocarbon corresponding to said hydroperoxide which comprises conducting oxidation of said hydrocarbon with an oxygen-containing gas in a reaction mixture containing said hydrocarbon and a catalyst comprising a cyclic imide

compound and an alkaline metal compound wherein the amount of said cyclic imide in the reaction mixture ranges from 0.0001 to 1 percent by weight.

Claim 13 (New) A process for preparing a hydroperoxide from a hydrocarbon corresponding to said hydroperoxide which comprises conducting oxidation of said hydrocarbon with an oxygen-containing gas in a reaction mixture containing said hydrocarbon and a catalyst comprising a cyclic imide compound and an alkaline metal compound wherein the amount of said alkaline metal compound in the reaction mixture ranges from 0.000005 to 0.01 percent by weight.

Claim 14 (New) A process for preparing a hydroperoxide from a hydrocarbon corresponding to said hydroperoxide which comprises conducting oxidation of said hydrocarbon with an oxygen-containing gas in a reaction mixture containing said hydrocarbon and a catalyst comprising a cyclic imide compound and an alkaline metal compound wherein the amount of said alkaline metal compound in the reaction mixture ranges from 0.000005 to 0.01 percent by weight.

Claim 15 (New) The process according to Claim 1 wherein the hydrocarbon is an alralkane.

Claim 16 (New) The process according to Claim 15 wherein the hydrocarbon is ethylbenzene.

Claim 17 (New) The process according to Claim 1 wherein the hydrocarbon is a primary hydrocarbon.

Claim 18 (New) The process according to Claim 1 wherein the hydrocarbon is a secondary hydrocarbon.